

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 HONG K 11603 01 OF 02 230917Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 VO-05 INSE-00 SSO-00
/036 W

-----082885 230932Z /11

O P 230830Z AUG 78
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2859
INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 HONG KONG 11603

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF
SUBJECT: U.S. NAVY FRIGATE BRINGING 400 REFUGEES TO HONG KONG;
HONG KONG GOVT INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT REFUGEE POPULATION
AND LACK OF MOVEMENT

1. USS WHIPPLE (FF-1062), FRIGATE MANNED BY 260 OFFICERS AND
MEN, PICKED UP MORE THAN 400 RPT 400 INDOCHINA REFUGEES
IN SOUTH CHINA SEA ON AUGUST 22 AS THE 66 FOOT VIETNAMESE
FISHING BOAT TOOK ON WATER IN HEAVY SEAS DURING RAINSTROM.
SINCE HONG KONG WAS NEXT SCHEDULED PORT OF CALL, USS WHIPPLE
CONTINUED ON COURSE. IT IS EXPECTED ARRIVE HERE AUGUST 24
AT 9:00 AM.

2. HONG KONG GOVT UNENTHUSIASTICALLY HAS GRANTED USS WHIPPLE
PERMISSION TO LAND REFUGEES FOR TEMPORARY ASYLUM. UNHCR
REP CARPENTER BELIEVES THAT ALL REFUGEES CAN BE ACCOMMODATED
SAME DAY, BUT NOTED THAT THIS HIGH NUMBER WILL TAKE UP
ALL EXISTING AND RESERVE CAPACITY. HE TOLD US THAT HE WILL
SEEK ADDITIONAL REFUGEE ACCOMMODATION SITES IN HONG KONG.

3. ACTING POLITICAL ADVISOR ORR TOLD US THERE IS
INCREASING PRESSURE WITHIN HONG KONG GOVT TO ADOPT
A MORE RESTRICTIVE POLICY TOWARDS VESSELS BRINGING
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 HONG K 11603 01 OF 02 230917Z

IN BOAT REFUGEES. HE SAID THAT WHILE HONG KONG
GOVT WAS ABLE MAINTAIN ITS POLICY FOR THESE 400
REFUGEES SINCE HONG KONG WAS NEXT SCHEDULED PORT
OF CALL, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THIS POLICY
WILL CONTINUE IN FUTURE. HE NOTED THAT, UNLIKE
OTHER COUNTRIES, HONG KONG HAS NOT SOUGHT U.S.
GUARANTEES. THIS HE BELIEVES WORKS AGAINST HONG

KONG'S INTERESTS SINCE REFUGEES LANDED UNDER U.S. GUARANTEE GET PRIORITY HANDLING AND MOVE TO U.S. AHEAD OF OTHERS. HE ESTIMATED THAT PERHAPS ONLY 35 PER CENT (PROBABLY CORRECT IN OUR OPINION) OF THE 400 PLUS REFUGEES ON USS WHIPPLE WILL MEET CAT I THROUGH III CRITERIA, MEANING THAT APPROXIMATELY 260 OF THESE REFUGEES WILL BE CAT IV AND WILL REMAIN HERE FOR MONTHS. HE EXPRESSED STRONG HOPE THAT DEPT WILL BE ABLE SUPPORT HONG KONG GOVT'S RELATIVELY LIBERAL POLICY TOWARDS BOAT REFUGEE ARRIVALS BY ALLOCATING MORE NUMBERS N SEPT. TO HONG KONG REFUGEES.

4. CHOU, OFFICIAL IN HONG KONG IMMIGRATION DEPT CHARGED WITH REFUGEE MATTERS, VISITED CONGEN TODAY TO REQUEST THAT MOVEMENT BEGIN SOONEST. HE REPORTED THAT HONG KONG GOVT PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT LARGE NUMBER OF REFUGEES (WELL OVER 1,200 OUT OF PRESENT REFUGEE POPULATION OF 2164) IN CATEGORY IV AND PROSPECT THEY WILL REMAIN IN HONG KONG INDEFINITE NUMBER OF MONTHS BEFORE BEING RESETTLED. PRESENT INFUX OF REFUGEES IS MUCH HIGHER THAN THOSE ABLE MEET CAT I THROUGH III CRITERIA, CHOU NOTED, MEANING THAT UNLESS CAT IV REFUGEES CAN MOVE SOON BOAT POPULATION HERE WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD UNTIL IT BECOMES UNACCEPTABLE. HE URGED THAT SOME CAT IV REFUGEES BE MOVED AS SOON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 HONG K 11603 01 OF 02 230917Z

AS POSSIBLE.

5. WHEN WE MENTIONED TO ORR THAT USE OF MACAU AS TRANSIT SITE WOULD RELIEVE PRESSURE ON HONG KONG, HE SAID THAT HONG KONG GOVT HAS ASKED UK MISSION GENEVA THROUGH LONDON TO PROD UNHCR ON THIS. HE SAID IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IF REFUGEES COULD BE MOVED TO MACAU FROM HONG KONG SOONEST, AND IT NEEDS HIGHER PRIORITY THAT UNHCR APPARENTLY HAS ACCORDED IT.

6. WHILE HONG KONG GOVT CLEARLY HOPE THAT DEPT WILL GIVE IT SOME SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR LANDING 400 USS WHIPPLE REFUGEES WITHOUT FUSS, WE BELIEVE THAT ORR AND CHOU ARE CORRECT IN STATING PRESSURE IS BUILDING AGAINST PRESENT REFUGEE POLICY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT IMMIGRATION DIRECTOR, FOR EXAMPLE, IS QUESTIONING POLICY WHICH IN HIS VIEW ALLOWS REFUGEE POPULATION TO INCREASE WITHOUT ANY SIGNIFICANT OUTFLOW. UNFORTUNATELY, NO OTHER COUNTRY THAN U.S. AND CANADA (FIVE FAMILIES MONTHLY) HAS REFUGEE PROGRAM HERE. HONG KONG GOVT HAS PRESSED UNHCR REP CARPENTER FOR OTHER THIRD COUNTRY ACCEPTANCES, BUT HE HAS

NOT BEEN ABLE ACHIEVE ANY REAL RESULTS. HONG KONG GOVT IS ALSO PUSHING UK TO TAKE MORE REFUGEES THAN PRESENT 62 SCHEDULED TO DEPART SOON, BUT UK HAS NOT INDICATED WHETHER IT WILL BE ABLE TAKE ADDITIONAL REFUGEES.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 HONG K 11603 02 OF 02 230927Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 VO-05 INSE-00 SSO-00
/036 W

-----082952 230932Z /11

O P 230830Z AUG 78
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2860
INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 HONG KONG 11603

7. IT MUST BE BORNE IN MIND THAT, ASIDE FROM BOAT REFUGEES, HONG KONG HAS ITS OWN REFUGEE PROBLEMS. AT PRESENT TIME, AVERAGE OF 180 PERSONS FROM CHINA RE ENTERING DAILY, ALMOST ALL OF WHOM WILL RESIDE HERE. SOME HUNDREDS MORE ENTER ILLEGALLY FROM CHINA EACH MONTH. HONG KONG HAS BEEN EVACUATING DIRECTLY FROM VIETNAM DEPENDENTS OF HONG KONG RESIDENTS, SOME 4,500 TO DATE, ALL OF WHOM ARRIVE FOR RESIDENCE HERE. IT IS EXPECTED THAT MANY OF THE 160,000 PLUS SINO-VIETNAMESE WHO FLED TO CHINA WILL BEGIN TO APPLY FOR EXIT PERMITS TO COME TO HONG KONG FOR RESIDENCE OR ALLEGED ONWARD TRAVEL. CHINESE AUTHORITIES HAVE INDICATED THAT PERMITS WILL BE ISSUED TO THOSE WITH RELATIVES OUTSIDE OF CHINA.

8. CONGEN BELIEVES THAT SOME SIGNAL MUST BE GIVEN TO HONG KONG GOVT THAT CAT IV REFUGEES WILL MOVE SOON. ONE SOLUTION WOULD BE TO ASSIGN AT LEAST 200 CAT IV NUMBERS TO REFUGEES HERE IN SPET. ANOTHER SOLUTION WOULD BE CONDITIONAL ENTRY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THERE MAY BE UP TO 1,000 CONDITION ENTRY NUMBERS STILL AVAILABLE THIS FISCAL YEAR WHICH HAVE NOT YET BEEN ASSIGNED. WHILE INS IS OPPOSED TO USE OF

CONDITIONAL ENTRY NUMBERS FOR BOAT REFUGEES DURING
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 HONG K 11603 02 OF 02 230927Z

LRP, WE HOPE THAT DEPT COULD APPROACH INS IN ATTEMPT
OBTAIN SOME NUMBERS FOR HONG KONG. IT WOULD ALSO
BE IN INS INTEREST TO BE HELPFUL. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN
TALKING ABOUT U.S. GUARANTEES TO OTHER COUNTRIES,
ORR NOTED THAT HONG KONG EVEN FACILITATED SUCH
GUARANTEES BY ISSUING RENTRY PERMITS (REQUIRED BY
INS REGULATION) TO REFUGEES BROUGHT HERE FROM HARD-LINE
COUNTRIES FOR CONDITIONAL ENTRY PROCESSING.

9. WE REALIZE THAT HONG KONG GOVT'S REQUEST FOR SPECIAL
CONDITION PRESENTS DEPT WITH PROBLEM BUT UNLESS
SOMETHING SPECIAL IS DONE, HONG KONG GOVT MAY WELL
SEEK U.S. GUARANTEE IN ANY FUTURE ARRIVAL BY U.S.
SHIP.

SHOESMITH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, SEA RESCUES, POPULATION MOVEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978HONGK11603
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780344-0684
Format: TEL
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780834/aaaabbxb.tel
Line Count: 192
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a3d1305d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1650964
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. NAVY FRIGATE BRINGING 400 REFUGEES TO HONG KONG; HONG KONG GOVT INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT REFUGEE POPULATION AND LACK OF MOVEMENT
TAGS: SREF, HK
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a3d1305d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014